

Forchelli, Curto, Deegan, Schwartz, Mineo & Terrana, LLP: Successful lawyers, successful clients

Founded in 1976, Uniondale-based Forchelli, Curto, Deegan, Schwartz, Mineo & Terrana, LLP has grown from three attorneys to one of Long Island's top law firms comprised of more than 60 lawyers providing counsel to a broad range of clients, including national, regional and local businesses.

As it has done for the past 40 years, the firm is "growing, adding good people and servicing our clients with the best legal advice available," said Managing Partner and Founder Jeffrey D. Forchelli.

The firm has continued expanding its practice areas which include real estate, land use and zoning, tax certiorari, litigation, corporate, trusts and estates, labor and employment, municipal, banking, construction, and environmental. After leaving the bench in December, retired judge Michael A. Ciaffa recently joined the firm's Litigation department. In addition, the firm recently expanded its Real Estate and Labor and Employment departments with the addition of four new attorneys: Daniel S. Dornfeld, Elbert F. Nasis and Tara Sorensen, formerly of Dornfeld and Nasis, LLP, and Dana Y. Lee.

"We like to bring in qualified young people because they are the future of the firm," Forchelli said. "Any organization must have a blend of the enthusiasm and energy of youth, as well as the wisdom and experience of the older generation. Young people bring in a lot of new ideas and by having the young teach the old and the old teach the young, we all meet in the middle."

Focusing on all aspects of commercial real estate, Dan Dornfeld represents some of the largest and most prominent property owners, contractors and real estate developers in New York. Elbert Nasis, who with Dornfeld joins the firm as a partner, is a senior litigator handling complex litigation matters in state and federal courts. Tara Sorensen handles various aspects of litigation, real estate and landlord/tenant matters. Dana Lee, who is fluent in Korean, concentrates her practice in real estate transactions, real estate lending, condominiums and cooperatives.

When the firm was first established, each attorney practiced in several different areas. Today, as the firm has grown, its attorneys have become more specialized and better able to offer its clients enhanced capabilities on sophisticated matters, Forchelli said. "Today, lawyers tend to know more and more about their areas of expertise," he said. "Having specialists means being able to provide better, higher quality, more informed services to our clients."

In 2009, with a continual focus on maintaining its vitality for future generations, the firm relocated to the top floor of RXR Realty's The Omni in Uniondale, one of Long Island's premier buildings.

"We are in a prestigious space, which represents where we believe we are as a firm and the message we want to convey to the community and the profession," said Chief Operating Partner John V. Terrana.



Forchelli, Curto, Deegan, Schwartz, Mineo & Terrana LLP Partners



Managing Partner, Jeffrey D. Forchelli.

When the firm moved to its present location, the latest in design and conference technology was implemented. To remain current and up-to-date, earlier this year many technological improvements and upgrades were made throughout the firm.

"We have focused on increasing the speed, reliability and security of our system," said Partner Daniel P. Deegan, co-chair of the firm's Technology Committee (along with Partner Andrew E. Curto). "Off-site remote access has also been a priority in order to allow our attorneys and staff seamless access to our database, timekeeping and email systems when home or otherwise away from the office."

As the legal industry has evolved,

so have the professional and business interests of Long Island's in-house attorneys. Recognizing a need in the local business community, six years ago, the firm founded the Long Island General Counsel Network (LIGCN), an educational and networking program for Long Island and New York City metro area general counsel and other in-house attorneys. The LIGCN, headed by firm Partner Joseph V. Cuomo, currently has over 200 members and maintains an active LinkedIn group for its members to communicate via an open email forum.

Earlier this year, Forchelli, Curto, Deegan, Schwartz, Mineo & Terrana, LLP was named the exclusive sponsor for the Long Island Region of the Association of Corporate Counsel (ACC) Greater New York Chapter. The ACC, the largest community of in-house counsel in the world, is a global bar association that promotes the common professional and business interests of in-house counsel who work for corporations, associations and other private sector organizations through information, education, networking opportunities and advocacy initiatives. With an international membership of more than 36,000 in-house lawyers at more than 10,000 corporations and non-governmental organizations in 90 countries, the ACC serves as the voice of the in-house professional. The Greater New York Chapter is one of the largest and most active ACC chapters and is comprised of more than 1,700 members.

"To be the exclusive ACC sponsor on Long Island is very exciting for us," Cuomo said. "We had been running the LIGCN with very good success. Partnering with ACC, the world's leading provider to the in-house community, has been a very good opportunity for both organizations. We can now bring resources from ACC to our group and

they can bring their members to the LIGCN. We anticipate providing a lot of benefits for everyone involved going forward."

Many of the firm's partners have been AV-rated – the highest legal ability and ethics rating by Martindale-Hubbell Law Directory. The firm also has many attorneys who have been chosen by their peers as "New York Super Lawyers." The firm's partners have received numerous "Legal Eagles" awards for excellence in real estate, zoning, banking and finance and tax certiorari. Its growing pool of talented and qualified young professionals have been recognized and awarded with several honors, including Super Lawyers Rising Stars.

The firm takes its role as a good corporate citizen very seriously. With a vibrant and cohesive workplace comprised of expert attorneys and top-notch support staff, the firm has been described by its employees as having a strong sense of community and camaraderie. This culture starts at the top with its partners and works its way into every facet of the firm.

The firm supports many charitable and philanthropic causes including the Interfaith Nutrition Network – The INN, which was one of the firm's 2014 charitable recipients for its annual toy and toiletry drive. Each year, the firm supports the Tomorrow's Hope Foundation, the Boys & Girls Club of Oyster Bay-East Norwich, and the Feast of the Church of St. Rocco in Glen Cove, among others. Recently, Managing Partner Jeff Forchelli was honored by the Center for Developmental Disabilities, Inc. This July, he will be honored by the We Care Fund of the Nassau County Bar Association at its Annual Golf and Tennis Classic.